

Family Roots Run Deep in Forest Hills

Forest Hills Block Captain, Vicki Burns has been connected to Forest Hills her whole life. Family roots go even deeper with her ancestors arriving here in 1865, when Forest Hills was just a thicket with a farm belonging to our first resident, Warren Ferris.

In 1865, Vicki's great-great grandfather, William (Bill) Rupard (1829-1910) and his wife Sarah Jane Fisher Rupard (1831-1917) came here in a wagon train from Kentucky with the Fishers and Rupard families, who settled where Buckner Children's Home is now at Buckner/Hwy 30. While operating the Beeman's Grist Mill on White Rock Creek, Bill Rupard bought John Neely Bryan's cabin. The owner of the mill was John Beeman, whose daughter, Margaret was married to Bryan. After the Civil War, the Bryan family had moved the historic one-room



Great-Great Grandfather Bill Rupard purchased the John Neely Bryan's cabin 1865-1867.

cabin, which had been the first Dallas post office in 1843, to farmland near the Beeman's White Rock Mill. The Rupards lived in the cabin for many years and eventually moved the cabin onto the Buckner Children's Home property, where within its walls Rev. Buckner and the directors knelt and dedicated the new Orphan Home in September 1880. It is the same cabin that you can see today in Dealy Plaza, downtown.

Bill's daughter, Virginia Rupard (1867-1945) was born in that cabin, on land near the mill, which later would be the DeGolyer Estate (1939), where the Arboretum is today. Later in her life, she would tell tales of her childhood, seeing the notorious outlaw, Belle Starr riding along with her sidekicks to hide out in Ferris Thicket (Forest Hills) and of seeing panthers on their late night buggy rides home through the

thicket. As a young child she might have been in that crowd of 7,000 at the East Dallas depot, July 16, 1872 to see the celebrated arrival of the railroad, Houston & Texas Central (Southern Pacific).

In 1881, Vicki's great grandfather, John Tom Frank (1860-1936) from Kentucky arrived in Dallas at the age of 21. Early in his life he worked on a farm near Garland, then called Duck Creek and at a dairy farm North of Dallas owned by W. W. Caruth. He married Virginia Rupard in 1890 and their only child, Charles William (Buck) was born in 1895 on the family farm where Ferguson and Highland are today.

In the early 1900's, John Tom built a small house for his family on 5 acres at the edge of Ferris Thicket (Forest Hills), where San Rafael between Garland and Highland are now. White Rock Creek flowed (many times overflowed) behind them. Hwy. 78/Garland Rd., the narrow dirt/gravel road was called the Central National Highway of the Republic of Texas (1844).

In 1911 when White Rock Lake was built for a more dependable water source to Dallas, 51 year old John Tom Frank saw an opportunity with Dallas residents coming out for day outings in the countryside to fish, picnic and duck hunt.

He gave part of his land for widening the road (Garland Rd.) and built a food stand and bait house next to their house where he sold hamburgers and beer. He sold bait to the fisherman, rented out bicycles and boats. It is said he put the first boat on White Rock Lake in 1917 with the fisherman referring to the dock on Garland Rd. as "Frank Pier". Their address became 7229 Forest Hills Rd. (not San Rafael as it is now) in 1924, when Ferris Thicket was developed into the new Forest Hills Addition. That concession stand remained in operation for 25 years until it closed in 1933.

When Vicki's great grandmother Virginia died in 1945, she still did not have electricity, was using kerosene lamps and was heating her iron on a wood-burning stove. "Blankety Blank" electricity will kill you!", she'd say. She was buried in the Cox Cemetery by the lake, filled with other prominent pioneer families like the McCommas, Williamsons, Ledbetters & Fishers. (Fisher Road was named after her uncle Thomas.) The cemetery is also said to be the resting place of a young lady that the legendary ghost story, "The Lady of the Lake" was based.



Great Grandfather, John Tom Frank built a home on what is now San Rafael at Garland Road in the early 1900's.



*The Past on San Fernando:
Vicki and Mom*

Vicki's grandfather, Buck Frank received the Purple Heart when wounded as a machine-gunner with the 19th division in France's Argonne Forest. The World War I veteran returned home, helped at the food stand and later worked at the Dallas County Tax Assessors. Buck built a little house next door to his parents for his new wife, Hattie Toler in 1930 and went on to become the Dallas Commissioner for District 2 from 1937-1948.

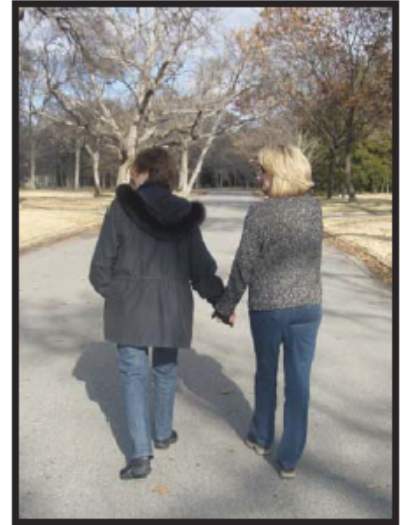
Frank's daughter/Vicki's mother, Charlene grew up with the new Forest Hills neighborhood at her doorstep. She caught her first fish, a black bass, in White Rock Creek at 6. All throughout her school years, the neighborhood was filled with children. The triangle at San Rafael and Forest Hills was where they played endless hours of sandlot baseball. Summer brought swimming and picnicking at White Rock's bathhouse and Saturdays, the movies at Lakewood or Casa Linda.

When Vicki's mom and dad married in the 50's, they moved a stone's throw away, up the hill from the home place, into a small duplex in the first block of San Fernando, where a new house stands today at 8129. This was Vicki's home until she was 4, when they moved to Mesquite and later to a new housing development, off St. Francis near I-30, adjacent to the old White Rock Airport. Vicki went to Bayles Elementary, J.L. Long Middle School and Skyline High

School. From Middle School on, her very best friend was Lynn Glieber, who lived in Forest Hills. This magical neighborhood was where the inseparable teens would hang out, ride horses, have slumber parties and cruise around the lake.

In 1984, that original 5 acre family property with the houses, the 1917-built red barn, a smoke house, hen house and large garden were sold by Vicki's grandmother, Hattie Frank, as was an adjoining parcel by its owner to make way for "Highland on the Creek".

Flip the calendar forward from then to 2005. Vicki and her husband, living at Cedar Creek Lake, planned to move to Dallas. Since Larry was raised on Cambria, he favored Lakewood. Vicki with her family ties and fond teenage memories had her eyes on Forest Hills. One day, Larry got a tip about a house for sale on Santa Clara. You can imagine Vicki's delight when they drove up and discovered it was her best friend's house. The very house at which she had spent endless, happy hours! Vicki had come home. The rest is history!



*A walk down memory lane for
Vicki Bums and mother,
Charlene Boatright*



*Today on Santa Clara:
Vicki and Mom*



**THE
COMMUNIQUE**

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